



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

December 9, 2004

Fact Sheet

Foreign Corruption Task Force

ICE Financial Investigations has established the first Foreign Corruption Task Force Task Force in Miami to specifically target the proceeds of public corruption emanating from foreign nations that are being laundered in the United States.

Through traditional asset identification methods and historic expertise in money laundering, ICE agents have identified various methods used by corrupt government officials to conceal embezzled funds. As a result, ICE has seized funds and other assets in the United States that represent foreign corruption proceeds. Due to the sensitivity of these investigations, ICE agents coordinate their efforts with the Department of State, ICE Attaché offices in foreign nations, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, numerous U.S. federal agencies, and representatives of the foreign governments whose public funds have been embezzled.

The Foreign Corruption Task Force is making use of new legal tools to help achieve its objectives. Section 315 of the USA Patriot Act amends Title 18, USC 1956, allowing for the inclusion of foreign corruption crimes as predicate offenses to money laundering crimes. As a result, ICE has been empowered to assist foreign governments in analyzing financial records of public officials who have engaged in corruption and laundered their illicit funds through U.S. financial institutions.

ICE's Foreign Corruption Task Force is currently conducting 12 foreign corruption financial investigations involving eight different nations. As an example, ICE recently obtained information about individuals illegally residing in the U.S. under false pretenses and who were responsible for the embezzlement of several million dollars of public funds from a South American nation. ICE agents launched an investigation to identify money laundered through U.S. financial institutions and assets acquired with illicit funds. ICE agents have identified U.S. assets that are subject to seizure and other individuals involved in the money laundering scheme. At the conclusion of this investigation, criminal charges will be pursued for money laundering violations in the U.S. Assets subject to seizure and forfeiture will be repatriated to the host government.

Other significant investigations are proceeding in partnership with governments in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is anticipated that other nations will seek the expertise of ICE Foreign Corruption Task Force to find and recoup monies looted from their treasuries by corrupt officials.

The Foreign Corruption Task Force is just one component of ICE's overall effort to combat money laundering and related financial crime. In fiscal year 2004 alone, ICE financial investigations yielded more than 1,360 arrests, 890 indictments, 660 convictions, and the seizure of \$202.6 million in assets. At the same time, ICE conducted more than 850 outreach presentations to more than 8,500 private sector representatives nationwide to share information on financial and trade investigations.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.